DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 284 596 JC 870 210

TITLE Maricopa Community Colleges Commission on Student Assessment and Initial Course Placement. Report and Recommendations Submitted to the Vice-Chancellor for Educational Development.
INSTITUTION Maricopa County Community Coll. District, Phoenix, Ariz.
PUB DATE 3 May 84
NOTE 25p.; Paper collected as part of the American Association for Higher Education Assessment Forum.
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Viewpoints (120)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Community Colleges; *Educational Policy; Educational Testing; Policy Formation; *Program Development; Program Effectiveness; *Student Evaluation; *Student Placement; Two Year Colleges
IDENTIFIERS *AAHE Assessment Forum

ABSTRACT

The Maricopa Community College District's (MCCD's) Commission on Student Assessment and Initial Course Placement was formed to assess the current status of student assessment for initial course placement across the district, to review the available instruments that assess student skills for placement, to discover what other community college districts are doing in this area, and, based on this information, to develop recommendations for assessment/placement in the district. Overall, the commission attempted to recommend a strong policy for all district campuses that would provide better service to students and strengthen the instructional program. In summary, the commission recommended that: (1) assessment be mandatory for all first-time students enrolling for seven or more credit hours, for any student enrolling for the first time in English, reading, or math, and for any continuing or former student who has accumulated six credit hours and who falls below a 2.0 grade point average; (2) all MCCD colleges use the same assessment instrument; (3) scores for placement be established by the English, reading, and math instructional councils and used districtwide; (4) a second level of assessment occur during the first week of classes each semester; (5) students be encouraged to participate in an assessment/advisement/orientation process prior to the registration period; and (6) research be implemented to support and evaluate the assessment and placement program. The commission report includes findings regarding MCCD assessment and placement procedures, placement testing at other colleges, and legal concerns; along with a detailed discussion of recommendations. (EJV)

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MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

# Commission on Student Assessment and Initial Course Placement

Report and Recommendations

Submitted to the

Vice-Chancellor for Educational Development

May 3, 1984

JC 870210

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Alfredo G. de los Santos, Jr.

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# INTRODUCTION

## Commission Responsibilities

The Commission on Student Assessment and Initial Course Placement was formed in November, 1983 by the Vice Chancellor for Educational Development. At the first meeting Dr. de los Santos assigned the following responsibilities:

1. Review the current status of the assessment of students across the colleges for initial placement in courses, especially in English, reading and mathematics.

2. Review the available instruments that assess student skills for placement.

3. Review what other flagship community college districts are doing in this area.

4. Recommend answers to the following questions:

   a. Should MCCD have a district-wide program for student assessment for initial course placement?

   b. Should all colleges use the same instrument(s)? Who should select the instrument(s)?

   c. Should student assessment be mandatory for full-time students? For part-time students?

   d. Should student placement in courses be mandatory as a result of assessment?

   e. Who should determine cut-off scores for student placement? Instructional Councils? DETF? ASTF? Should we have district- wide cut-off scores? Or should each college have different scores?

   f. When in the process of admissions/registration/advisement should students be assessed? Before registration? When?

As was suggested at the time, it was also necessary for the commission to answer a number of additional questions.

## Membership

The membership of the commission was designed to provide representation from administrative and faculty councils and from each college.

| | |
|---|---|
| Governing Board | Donald Campbell |
| Presidents' Council | Raul Cardenas, SMCC |
| Deans of Instruction | D. Jean Staten, GCC |
| Deans of Students | Bill Harris, MTCC |
| Occupational Deans | Ken Roberts, SMCC |
| English Instructional Council | Jan Boerner, GCC |
| Math Instructional Council | Ed Chandler, PC |
| Reading Instructional Council | Selma Wilf, PC |
| Arts and Sciences Task Force | Sylvia Meixner, GCC |
| Developmental Education Task Force | Rodger Slater, SCC |
| English as a Second Language | Donnella Eberle, MCC |
| Adult Basic Education/GED | Mary Johnson, RSCC |
| Counseling | Charlie Mitchell, MCC |
| Office of the Vice Chancellor for Educational Development | Bertha Landrum, Mary Day, Kathie Driscoll |
| Commission Chair | Kay Martens, MTCC |

## Procedures

The Commission held thirteen meetings between November and May. The majority of this time was devoted to gathering information, reviewing materials and raising questions. At its April 5, 1984 meeting the Commission began the process of addressing what had become a three page list of questions. (See Appendix A) The Commission also established the following voting procedures:

1. A minimum of ten members had to be present before voting could take place.
2. A majority vote of the members present was required on the questions the Commission was charged to answer.
3. All members were asked to give their opinions before a question was discussed.

Minutes, summary memos and handouts were provided to keep absent members informed, and written votes were accepted from members unable to attend any of the final meetings.

## Summary of Concerns and Recommendations

The purpose of an assessment and placement program is to insure proper course placement and to assist students to obtain the skills they need to successfully complete their educational goals. The Commission views assessment as a process by which students' skills and knowledge are identified and evaluated. While testing is a necessary part of that process, other data should also be considered as part of a total orientation and advisement process.

The Commission strongly emphasizes that assessment should not be used as a barrier to the open door. It should not exclude students from admission to any MCCD college.

In developing recommendations for an assessment and placement program, the Commission has tried to balance a variety of concerns. As current MCCD procedures were reviewed, great varience was found among the colleges. In choosing to respect the advice of legal counsel that there be standardization of policy across the district, the Commission has recommended a program which will probably require some change for all colleges. The Commission has tried to balance the concerns of faculty that students enter classes with the necessary academic preparation with the recognition that tests are not perfect indicators of that preparation. Further, the Commission has emphasized the importance of advisement while recognizing that it is the student who makes the final choice. Overall, the Commission has tried to recommend a strong policy which will provide better service to students and strengthen the instructional program.

The following is a brief summary of the recommendations explained in detail in the last section of this report.

1. MCCD shall institute a district-wide program for student assessment for initial course placement.

2. Assessment shall be mandatory for: (1) all first time students enrolling for seven or more credit hours, (2) any student enrolling for the first time in an English, reading or math class, (3) any continuing or former student who has accumulated 6 credit hours and who falls below a 2.0 gradt point average. Students who have earned an Associates degree or higher shall be exempt.

   Assuming that the report of the Subcommittee on degree requirements is accepted, all students should be assessed before the completion of 16 credit hours.

3. All MCCD colleges shall use the same assessment instrument(s) and these instrument(s) shall be selected by the English, reading and math instructional councils.

4. Scores for placement shall be established by these instructional councils and used district-wide. Score ranges shall include a decision zone for students whose scores are borderline between course placements. Initial placement in English, reading and math courses shall be based on these scores and shall be mandatory.

5. A second level of assessment shall occur during the first week of classes of each semester. Instructors will collect additional information and review the initial placement with the student. At that time, the instructor may recommend a change in course placement. If, after consultation, the student does not agree with the instructor's recommendation, the student must sign a waiver indicating she/he does not intend to follow that recommendation.

6. Students should be encouraged to participate in an assessment/advisement/orientation process prior to the registration period. However, students for whom assessment is mandatory must be assessed prior to enrollment.

7. Research shall be implemented to support and evaluate the assessment and placement rogram.

While it was not within the scope of the Commission's task to address placement in courses other than English, reading and math, members recognize that these skills are important. For this reason, the Commission also recommends that other instructional councils consider identifying pre-requisite skills or courses where program success assumes certain reading, writing, or computation competencies.

The remainder of this report reviews the Commission's findings and the questions it was asked to address.

## REVIEW OF FINDINGS

The Commission was asked to conduct reviews in three areas: MCCD procedures, procedures of flagship colleges, and placement testing. Members gathered the information on current MCCD assessment and placement procedures. League for Innovation colleges were selected as flagship colleges and members reviewed the information provided on their procedures. Journal articles and other materials were also reviewed. A variety of placement tests were collected and commission members met with testing representatives. In addition, the Commission felt that it was important to clarify legal concerns and asked district legal counsel for advice.

### MCCD Procedures

Within MCCD, only SMCC has a written philosophy statement for assessment and placement. Administrative responsibility for assessment lies with the Dean of Instruction at three colleges and within Student Services at the other four. MTCC tests only upon student request. Most other colleges require testing for students enrolling for more than 6 or 7 credits.

English, reading and math are the common subject areas tested, with ESL assessment occuring at four colleges. The College Guidance and Placement (CGP) reading test is used across the district for reading assessment. The CGP test is used for English assessment at all colleges except SMCC where a writing sample is taken. Math tests vary; four are locally developed; others include CGP and ASSET. Individual tests take an average of 25 minutes to administer with cut-off scores in English and math varying slightly across the district. All testing is done before registration, except at RSCC which administers tests during the first class session. RSCC is also the only college which does not use a Testing Center.

Counselors, faculty, program advisors, and students use the assessment information for advisement purposes. Three colleges have mandatory placement: MCC requires placement in ESL, English and math based on assessment results, SCC has mandatory math placement, and PC has mandatory English and math placement. Placement at GCC and SMCC is strongly recommended, as is English placement at SCC.

On most campuses students are also tested in class during the first week of the semester. At two colleges students must sign disclaimers or waivers if they don't follow placement recommendations.

Detailed information gathered by Commission members was compiled in a matrix which is included as Appendix B.

### League for Innovation Colleges

MCCD's League Representative, Alfredo de los Santos Jr, sent League for Innovation members a copy of the questions the Commission was to address. Eleven of the eighteen colleges provided some information on their assessment and placement prodedures. Only one college, Delta, had no assessment and placement program.

Responses from the ten colleges with programs were varied. Three - Brookdale, Johnson County and Los Angeles - use one of the standardized batteries of tests, available from ACT or the College Board, in conjunction with student orientation, advisement and tracking. Other colleges emphasize similar procedures but have selected some combination of standardized tests for reading and English and (usually) a locally developed math test. Two colleges mentioned specific instruments for ESL assessment and one college, Cuyahoga, assesses for speech.

Some of the colleges also provided information on whether assessment and placement were mandatory. Assessment was typically mandatory for full-time students and students taking English or math classes. Four colleges reported that placement was also mandatory.

Most colleges emphasized the importance of follow-up research on the validity of instruments and cut-off scores. Some have collected or are collecting data on student retention.

Testing for Placement

In order to develop a more comprehensive understanding of placement testing, Commission members decided to take advantage of offers of assistance from two major testing companies - American College Testing (ACT) and the College Board. A comprehensive set of questions on tests and testing procedures (Appendix C) was developed by Commission members. These questions were discussed with Drs. John Roth, Armondo Alba and Mike Paparella of ACT at the February 28 meeting. This was followed by a presentation by Dr. L. Abernathy of the College Board at the March 20 meeting. The following is a general synthesis of the information provided.

Community colleges typically use one of three approaches to testing:

(1) develop their own local tests
(2) use a combination of tests from a variety of publishers
(3) select a package or set of tests developed by one publisher.

ACT currently recommends ASSET, a package developed for the Los Angeles Community College District. College Board provides the following options: the CGP, a package developed in 1969 for community colleges; Descriptive Test of Language Skills and Descriptive Tests of Math Skills, which are diagnostic; self-scoring placement tests, which are broad screening devices; and Assessment and Placement Services, a new package of tests. Also, the College Board is currently piloting a computerized adaptive test which includes English, reading and math. It is scheduled to be ready by the summer of 1985.

All tests discussed at both sessions were designed for local implementation and have flexible scoring options. National norms for a community college population are available. However, the importance of developing local norms was strongly emphasized. Both companies would assist in developing such norms and ACT provided examples of other research data that would also assist colleges in evaluating their placement process. If one college were to use the computer as a test delivery system, separate norms would have to be developed. Representatives of both companies noted that placement tests were not comprehensive or detailed enough to provide diagnostic information and that diagnostic testing should follow the placement process.

Colleges are currently using a variety of tests for ESL students, some of which were designed for English or reading placement, rather than for ESL placement. The College Board has three ESL tests - Pre-Test of English as a Foreign Language, Second Level English Proficiency Test and ESL Achievement Test. All assume the student has had previous classroom instruction in English.

Writing samples are currently of interest in many colleges. ACT has developed procedures for assisting in standardizing the scoring and College Board has a list of pre-tested essay topics. Because of the time involved in scoring, essays are most frequently given during the first class session. Dr. Abernathy suggested that research indicates that objective tests are as valid as writing samples for English placement.

There is no one math test that can be given for placement at all levels. ASSET includes three levels: numerical skills, elementary algebra and intermediate algebra. The College Board Assessment test only includes the first two. An intermediate algebra and a functions and graphs test are also available.

A number of procedures were discussed which can be used to make testing an effective process. Representatives from both companies emphasized the importance of making placement a flexible process and considering information other than test scores. Colleges using ASSET, for example, are requiring assessment and orientation but leaving the final placement decision to the student. In addition, ASSET has established a "decision zone," a middle score range where students are told they can take either class and should consider other factors in making their decision. ACT strongly emphasized the importance of an orientation program which included information on college curriculum and resources, provided descriptions of behaviors of successful students and helped students use important college documents such as the catalog. Six week check-ups and follow-ups with students who missed class were also encouraged.

National norms and a content analysis of test items can be used in initial identification of cut-off scores. This must be followed by validity studies and the development of local norms. Both companies provide assistance in developing local norms.

Research on the effects of testing on enrollment has shown, according to Dr. Abernathy, an initial drop in the first semester followed by a recovery second semester and increases in the third semester. Increases usually include increases in enrollment in advanced courses. Dr. Roth reported that colleges typically see a one or two semester increase in enrollments in developmental courses and improved retention.

None of the testing representatives felt that we should establish minimum cut-off scores which would exclude students from admission to the institution. Dr. Abernathy noted that this would be contrary to College Board philosophy. ACT representatives emphasized the importance of using test data to assist students to make informed decisions.

A file of tests was available for review. A complete list is included in Appendix D.

Legal Issues

MCCD legal counsel, Janice McIlroy was most helpful in responding to questions from the Commission and in raising questions that should be considered. The following is a brief summary of the information provided.

Nothing legally prohibits MCCD from using test data to place students in classes. This includes using results from English, math and reading tests as prerequisites to enrolling in any course where the skills tested are relevant to success in the course. National community college norms could be used in establishing cut-off scores. However, district-wide norms should be developed.

Criteria established for placement should be used consistently across the district. It should not be possible for a student to be admitted to a course at one college and denied admission to the same course at another college.

Once a student is placed, the instructor has the option of changing that placement. Decisions would be based on the instructor's professional judgement.

MCCD could also establish criteria for admissions. However, those criteria would have to be validated prior to implementation. It would have to be shown that a "good percentage" (possibly 70 - 75%) of the people who fall below the cut-off score could not complete developmental courses.

It was suggested that any new policy should be clearly stated in the common pages of the catalog before it is implemented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Should MCCD have a district-wide program for student assessment for initial course placement?

The Commission recommends that MCCD institute a district-wide program for student assessment for initial course placement. The purpose of an assessment program shall be to provide students and advisors with advisement information. Assessment shall not be used to exclude an individual from admission to the college. Members emphasized that a district-wide assessment program would make the process of changing colleges easier for students.

> "Assessment is defined as a process by which skills and knowledge are identified and evaluated. Assessment at all colleges within the MCCD will include mandatory placement testing in English, reading and mathematics. This process may also include interviews, observation and the consideration of previous experience and past academic performance."

2. Should student assessment be mandatory for full-time students? For part-time students?

The Commission recommends that assessment - including mandatory placement testing in English, reading and math - shall be mandatory for:

1. All first time students enrolling for seven credit hours or more at any MCCD college.
2. Any student enrolling for the first time in a reading, math or English class.
3. Any continuing or former student who has accumulated six credit hours and whose GPA falls below a 2.0.
4. All students, before the completion of 16 credit hours (assuming acceptance of the recommendations of the Subcommittee on degree requirements).

Students who have earned an Associates degree or higher shall be exempt.

The Commission further recommends that all instructional councils examine the basic literacy skills needed in their courses. Consideration should be given to the identification of prerequisite skills or courses where program success assumes certain reading, writing or computation competencies. Defining such pre-requisites would clarify the expected preparation for courses other than reading, math, English and English as a second language.

The Commission recognizes that the recommendations of the Subcommittee on Degree Requirements will affect the need for student assessment. The Subcommittee's recommendation for a General Education Core includes English, reading and math requirements. Specific courses are recommended. However, "or equivalent as indicated by assessment" is noted for reading and math. The Subcommittee also recommends that writing and reading requirements should be satisfied before completion of 16 credits of above 100 level course work. Assuming the Subcommittee's recommendations are accepted, the Commission recommends that all students be assessed before the completion of 16 credit hours.

3. Should student placement in courses be mandatory as a result of assessment?

The Commission recommends that initial placement in English, reading or math courses shall be mandatory as a result of assessment. The Commission further recommends that a second level of placement occur during the first week of classes each semester. During that time, instructors will collect additional information and review the initial placement with the student. The instructor may recommend a change in course placement. If, after consultation, the student does not agree with the instructor's recommendation, the student must sign a waiver indicating that she/he does not intend to follow the recommendation.

Satisfactory completion of a course should consititute the criterion for moving on to the next course. It should not be necessary for students to be retested.

In its discussions, the Commission emphasized that the intended outcome of assessment is proper course placement. The Commission strongly recommends that the assessment process shall not incoude minimum cut-off scores which would exclude students from admission to a MCCD college.

4. Should all colleges use the same instrument(s)? Who should select the instrument(s)?

The Commission recommends that all MCCD colleges use the same instrument(s) for initial course placement. Commission members see the English, reading and math instructional councils as the logical groups to make the final decisions on the assessment instrument(s).

However, the Commission feels that initial discussion of assessment instrument(s) should be done in conjunction with the members of the Commission. Others, such as testing experts, might be included. Therefore, the Commission recommends that a one day meeting be held during the summer of 1984. The morning of this meeting would be spent in sharing with instructional council members some of the concerns the Commission has identified. The afternoon would be for instructional councils to review tests and select instruments. The three instructional councils should then get together so that there can be a coordination, if possible, of the final selection. Commission members suggest that it would be more beneficial to the district if a package rather than separate instruments were selected.

The Commission also recommends that the Basic Skills competencies, as identified by the District Developmental Education Task Force, serve as guidelines for the selection of assessment instruments.

The Commission recommends that the instrument(s) for ESL assessment should be different from English assessment. It is further recommended that the selection of the instrument(s) for ESL should be done by the ESL faculty in conjunction with the English instructional council. Ideally, the Commission would like to see consistency in all assessment instrument(s). However, concerns have been expressed that there are different skills among ESL students at the various colleges. It was suggested that it would be more appropriate for ESL representatives to develop a small list of tests designated as appropriate for the different skills of ESL students. This would then allow each college to use the instrument most appropriate for each ESL student.

5. Who should determine cut-off scores for student placement? Instructional Councils? DETF? ASTF? Should we have district-wide cut-off scores? Or should each college have different scores?

The Commission recommends that there be district-wide norms for placement and that the English, reading and math instructional councils shall determine scores for student placement. The Commission further recommends that as instructional councils are determining placement scores, they include decision zones with the recommended scores for each course placement.

The inclusion of decision zones will allow students whose scores are borderline between course placements to decide which course to take. Advisement is particularly important for students whose scores are within decision zones. An example of advisement recommendations including decision zones is included in Appendix E.

Commission members emphasized that if a national test were selected the initial norms for this test should correspond to the national community college norms. This shall be followed by the development of local norms and those norms shall be evaluated on an on-going basis.

6. When in the process of admission/registration/advisement should students be assessed? Before registration? When?

The Commission recommends that students be assessed before enrolling in classes. This assessment might occur during the registration process. However, the Commission emphasized the importance of encouraging students to be assessed and advised prior to registration.

It is recommended that colleges set up appropriate procedures to encourage students to go through assessment early and to take advantage of the opportunity for orientation and advisement. The Commission suggests that assessment be available to students throughout the year and that, when possible, faculty be available to advise students.

The Commission expressed concern that assessment scores be current. It was, therefore, recommended that any student who must be assessed shall have completed that process no earlier than one year before enrollment.

The Commission expressed concern that the assessment policy be equally applied to all students identified for assessment. This would include students who register by phone, through the mail or on site. As colleges design procedures to implement this policy, advisement and assessment should be built into registration procedures.

Commission members see advisement and orientation as a major component of the assessment process. Specific procedures should be developed to coordinate assessment with orientation and advisement and to ensure adequate staffing of all such procedures. It is suggested that the Student Services Task Force and other groups concerned with advisement and orientation may want to recommend procedures.

The Commission also recognizes the importance of coordinating the assessment and advisement process with developmental courses.

The Commission recommends that the registration system identify students who need to complete the assessment process. The Commission suggests that the Student Information System identify courses which require assessment prior to enrollment, include student assessment scores on transcripts, develop means to provide those scores to advisors, and provide the student with advisement results. Ways for colleges to access assessment results or transcripts from other MCCD colleges also need to be included.

7. What research is needed to support a program of student assessment for initial course placement?

The Commission recommends that a research program be implemented to support student assessment for initial course placement. It has been previously recommended that all colleges would use national norms to begin the assessment process and that local norms should be developed. Local norms should be district, rather than college, norms.

The importance of developin a district research base to review, evaluate and, if necessary, change the process cannot be emphasized enough. This research system should include studies of predictive validity of the tests and correlation among tests. This research should also evaluate the placement of those students whose scores fall within a decision zone.

Commission members felt that it was too early to address the question of how a program of this type would be funded. Many of the elements of a successful program may already exist at the colleges. The question of specific cost will depend on the instrument selected and the research and other support services that might be provided by testing agencies.

Conclusion

The Commission's work is concluded with the submission of this report. With the acceptance of these recommendations, the development of procedures for implementation will rest with other bodies, such as instructional councils, the Student Services Task Force and the Student Information System Subcommittee.

The Commission again emphasizes that the purpose of an assessment and placement program is to help students achieve their educational goals. It is not intended to exclude students from admission to college.

The final success of any program rests with college personnel. Over the course of its discussions the Commission has been aware of the many differences in procedures among the MCCD colleges. Implementaion of these recommendations will require some changes at all colleges. It is hoped that college personnel will view such changes as an opportunity for creative problem solving across the district rather than as a burden directed at any particular college.

LIST OF APPENDICES

A. Questions

B. MCCD Procedures - Matrix

C. Testing Questions

D. List of Tests

E. Decision Zones

APPENDIX A

MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

COMMISSION ON STUDENT ASSESSMENT AND INITIAL COURSE PLACEMENT

Questions to be Addressed

1. Should MCCD have a district-wide program for student assessment for initial course placement?

   1.1 What are the legal issues involved with the use of assessment and placement with an open-door institution?

   1.2 How does assessment and placement relate to occupational programs or to courses other than English, reading and math?

   1.3 Should assessment and placement relate to the basic skills competencies that have been identified for entrance into 100 level courses?

   1.4 Should initial course assessment in English include assessment for ESL courses?

2. Should student assessment be mandatory for full-time students: For part-time students?

   2.1 What can be done about the problem of students who continually avoid testing requirements by taking six hours each semester? Or by adding classes during drop/add?

   2.2 Can/should assessment procedures be used for advanced placement? Honors?

   2.3 Should exemptions be made for certain individuals?

   2.4 What special provisions need to be made for handicapped students?

3. Should student placement in courses be mandatory as a result of assessment?

   3.1 Once a student is placed should the instructor have the option of changing that placement?

   3.2 Should a student be reassessed before moving on to a higher level course? Or, is completion of a course the criteria for moving on to the next course?

   3.3 Should there be a minimum cut-off score which would exclude students from admission to an institution? If so, how would the minimum be determined?

4. Should all colleges use the same instrument(s)? Who should select the instrument(s)?

   4.1 Should instrument(s) for ESL assessment be different from English assessment? Who should select the instrument(s)?

5. Who should determine cut-off scores for student placement? Instructional councils? DETF? ASTF? Should we have district-wide cut-off scores? Or should each college have different scores?

   5.1 Should "decision zones" be used rather than strict cut-off scores?

   5.2 What would be the basis for the initial determination of cut-off scores? What procedures would need to be established for revisions? How frequently should revisions be made?

6. When in the process of admissions/registration/advisement should students be assessed? Before registration? When?

   6.1 How will on-line registration affect the placement process?

   6.2 How can assessment be related to phone-in and mail registration?

6.3 Can special/appropriate adaptations be made for testing using different delivery systems?

6.4 What advisement procedures/system is needed to support assessment and placement?

6.5 What orientation procedures would be needed?

7. What research is needed to support a program of student assessment for initial course placement?

7.1 Should "local norms" be district or college norms? Who should be responsible for providing the data needed to develop these norms?

7.2 What studies should be done on the relationship between proper placement and retention? Who should conduct such studies?

8. Other

8.1 How should such a program be funded?

APPENDIX B

CURRENT ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT PROCEDURES IN THE MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

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| College | Philosophy & Purpose Statement | Responsible Agent | Subject Area Tested | Instrument Used | Time to Admin. | Cut-Offs | Who Tested | When Tested | Where Tested & by Whom | Who uses results | How use results | Options Available |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| CCC | NONE | Counseling & Academic Advisement Services | ENGLISH<br><br>READING<br><br>MATH<br>ESL | COP<br>ACT<br>SAT<br>COP<br>ACT<br>PC TEST<br>John's Test | 25 m<br><br><br>25 m<br><br>40 m | < 20-24<br>30-35<br>290-309<br>< 23<br>35-40<br>< 17 | required for students enrolling Eng, Rdg, Math110; required for all New Students enrolling 7 > hrs. | before regist(COP) writing sample in class | testing center by testing clerk | counselor faculty advs. | recommend strongly | writing sample in class; may retake test; developmental classes |
| MTCC | NONE | Director of Career Planning & Placement | ENGLISH<br>READING<br>MATH<br>ESL | COP<br>COP<br>ASSET (ACT)<br>NONE | 25 m<br>25 m<br>18 m | < 23<br>< 23<br>< 32 | upon request | before regist (in class 1st wk/class) | testing center by clerk | counselor faculty | advisement | |
| MCC | NONE | Dean of Students | ENGLISH<br>READING<br>MATH<br>ESL | COP<br>COP<br>PC TEST<br>MTELP | 25 m<br>25 m<br>40 m | < 25<br>< 23<br>< 17<br>< 80 | Enrolling in Eng Comp, ESL, Rdg, Math Both Part-time/Full-time | before regist M-TH 8-8/ FR-5 | testing center by clerk | faculty Advisors | Mandatory placement ESL, ENG, Math; Advise-Rdg. | reassess-in class assignment Eng/Math (common)/(rate) |
| PC | NONE | Dean of Instruction; TICCIT Director of Computer Services | ENGLISH<br>READING<br>MATH<br>ESL | TICCIT/COP<br>TICCIT/COP<br>TICCIT/PC TEST<br>NONE | 25 m<br>25 m<br>30 or 60m | < 25<br>< 23<br>30;50;90 | New students enrolling 7 > hrs. required for students enrolling ENG 101, Math 110 or > | before regist. | TICCIT area by clerk | faculty advisors counselor | Mandatory placement in Eng. and Math | Reading placement voluntary |
| RSCC | NONE | Dean of Education; Faculty; Program Advisor; Counselors | ENGLISH<br>READING<br>MATH<br>ESL | COP<br>COP<br>COP<br>oral assessment | 25 m<br>25 m<br>25 m<br>variable | < 25<br>< 23<br>varies<br>varies | Students in Eng 101 other testing upon request | during 1st class or at central location as announced | in class (sched site) by instr. | Instrs. Program Advisor Counselor Students | Advisement and placement | writing sample optional;drop class; remedial class; sign disclaimer. |
| SCC | NONE | Director of Counseling | ENGLISH<br>READING<br>MATH<br>ESL | COP<br>COP<br>SCC TEST<br>NONE | 25 m<br>25 m | < 23 | Students enrolling in Math; suggested Eng Rdg | before regist | Testing Center Clerk | Counselor Students | math mandatory placement; Eng placement based on writing sample | can appeal to division chair Eng. retest |
| SMCC | SEE ATTACHMENT | Dean of Instruction; Basic Skills Coordinator | ENGLISH<br><br>READING<br>MATH<br>ESL | WRITING SAMPLE<br><br>COP<br>COP<br>John's Test | 15 m<br><br>25 m<br>25 m | estab. criteria<br>< 23<br>< 36 | Students enrolling in 6>hrs or enrolling in Eng Math, Rdg, ESL | before regist | LAC testing room by testing clerk | counselor faculty advisors | placement based on scores | 1. Sign disclaimer & override recommendations<br>2. Testing & writing samples during 1st class can adjust schedule<br>3. Course modules provide student/faculty with placement options |
| Composite | NONE (6) | Varies<br>1 Instructional<br>4 Student Services | ENGLISH<br><br>READING<br>MATH<br><br>ESL | COP/wrtg sam(7)<br>COP (7)<br>PC test(3)<br>COP (1)<br>Asset(1)<br>SCC test (1)<br>John's Test (2)<br>MTELP (1)<br>[illegible] (3) | Ave. 25m each test | < 20-25<br><br>< 23<br>varies/test<br><br>varies/test | Varies | before reg 1st except RSCC | Test Center except RSCC | counselor faculty (2) Faculty adv. (2) Students | recommended placement for all areas, GCC, MTC, RSCC, SMCC; mandatory math placement SCC, MCC, PC, Mandatory Eng placement MCC, PC, mandatory ESL placement MCC | disclaimer; retakes; remedial placement;additional/optional tests |

## Assessment and Placement

South Mountain Community College is committed to providing students with the best opportunities for educational success. To aid this process, South Mountain Community College has designed and continues to refine an integrated assessment-and-placement procedure which goes beyond those minimum requirements suggested by MCCD catalog statements.

Because basic skills in reading, mathematics, and English are essential for success, students taking seven or more credit hours in a semester or any reading, mathematics, or English course are assessed for placement. The academic advisors use the results of the assessment process to assist students in appropriate course selection, assuming the perspective that the purpose of the assessment and placement procedures is not to deny students access to classes but rather to enable achievement and progress in classes of appropriate level.

The assessment-and-placement process was developed and continues to be reviewed by a multifaceted campus committee under the direction of the coordinator of basic skills. The assessment-and-placement procedures have been implemented through the commitment of all of the full-time faculty and a group of interested part-time faculty. (See the "Advisors' Blue Book" in the collection of exhibits.)

APPENDIX C

MARICOPA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

Commission on Student Assessment
and Initial Course Placement

Questions on Tests and Testing

For Discussion February 28 and March 20

1. What are the major tests currently being used in community colleges? And, for those tests:
   a. time to administer
   b. scoring procedures
   c. norms for community college population (types of students within the norm group)
   d. adaptability to computer testing
   e. designed for placement, diagnosis, both?

2. What tests are used in the following areas?
   a. ESL
   b. writing samples - scoring for placement
   c. math - is there one test that can be used for placement at all levels?

3. What procedures are used to make testing an effective process?
   a. how are they used in orientation? advisement?
   b. how are cut-off scores determined?
   c. what assistance is provided in developing local norms?
   d. can placement tests be used to identify Honors students?

4. What do follow-up studies show about the effects of testing?
   a. does it make a difference in enrollments? retention?
   b. how do sutdents react?

5. How do we decide who should be tested?
   a. are there short (quick & dirty) tests that can be used to determine if a students needs placement testing?
   b. what exemptions to testing have worked for colleges, i.e. college degree, GED?
   c. What special provisions need to be made for handicapped students?

6. How would you recommend that we deal with the following district issues?
   a. the relationship of placement tests to the basic skills competencies that have been identified for entrance to 100 level courses
   b. differences in campus procedures, curriculum and resources

7. Should there be a minimum cut-off score which would exclude students from admission to the institution? How are other colleges, other states, dealing with the low level students who enter through the open door?

8. What linkages are community colleges building with high schools to help improve the basic skills of high school students?

APPENDIX D

TESTS ON FILE

| TEST NAME | math | English | reading | complete* |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ASSESSMENT AND PLACEMENT SERVICES (College Board) | x | x | x | 6 |
| ASSET | x | x | x | 2 |
| BASIC SKILLS ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (7-12) (Min. Competency Tests) | x | x | x | 1 |
| CLAST (College Level Academic Skills Tests) Used at Santa Fe C.C. in Gainesville | x | x | x | 0 |
| CGP | x | x | x | 1 |
| DEGREES OF READING POWER | | | x | 1 |
| DESCRIPTIVE TEST OF LANGUAGE SKILLS (sep. tests in: Rdg Comp/Vocab/log Relat/Usage/Sent Structure) | | x | x | 1 each |
| DMI-MATH SYSTEMS, McGraw Hills levels A-G instructional objectives inventories in. | x | | | 1 |
| NELSON-DENNY Forms C,D,E,F, | | | x | 1 each |
| NEW JERSEY COLLEGE BASIC SKILLS PLACEMENT TEST | x | x | x | 1 |
| OBJECTIVE-REFERENCED BANK OF ITEMS AND TESTS (McGraw Hill) | x | x | x | 4 different samples |
| PRI-READING SYSTEMS, McGraw Hill levels A-E instructional objectives inventory included | | | x | 1 each level |
| TESTS OF ADULT BASIC EDUCATION Levels D,E,M | x | x | x | 1 each level |
| WRITING PROFICIENTY PROGRAM, TESTS 1 & 2 | | x | | 1 each |
| ESL | | | | |
| PRE-TOEFL (with cassette listening test) | | | | 1 |
| SECONDARY LEVEL ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (with cassette listening test) | | | | 1 |

* Complete test sets including administrator's manual and norming information

## ADVISING RECOMMENDATIONS

## BASED ON ASSESSMENT RESULTS

| Skill Area | Number Correct | % of HS Seniors* | Course Recommendations by Faculty |
|---|---|---|---|
| Language Usage | 0-39 | (Low 25%) | English Fundamentals, for building basic foundation skills ( including ESL courses) |
| | 40-41 | | Decision Zone |
| | 42-47 | (Mid 35%) | Intermediate English, for preparation for Freshman English transfer course or entry into employment |
| | 48-49 | | Decision Zone |
| | 50-64 | (Top 40%) | Freshman English, designed for college transfer |
| Reading Skills | 0-18 | (Low 25%) | Reading Fundamentals, for building basic foundation skills (including ESL reading courses) |
| | 19-20 | | Decision Zone |
| | 21-27 | (Mid 35%) | Intermediate Reading, for strengthening for more effective reading skills |
| | 28-29 | | Decision Zone |
| | 30-40 | (Top 40%) | Skills look good for most postsecondary learning opportunities; consider Power-Speed Reading courses |

NOTE: If your score falls in a "Decision Zone," you will need to decide which direction you will want to go. Your skills appear to be on the borderline in terms of your readiness for the higher course. The lower level course would offer a good review and skill building experience. If you should choose the higher course, you will find that you must apply good study skills and probably more time than other students to be successful. You may wish to discuss your options with a counselor before you make your decision.

*This column is for staff information only and would not appear on final versions to be used with students.

ADVISING RECOMMENDATIONS

BASED ON ASSESSMENT RESULTS
(continued)

| Skill Area | Number Correct | % of HS Seniors* | Course Recommendations by Faculty |
|---|---|---|---|
| Numerical Skills | 0-17 | (Low 40%) | Arithmetic Fundamentals, Business Computation Fundamentals, Introductory Technical Math |
| | 18-20 | | Decision Zone |
| | 21-32 | (Top 60%) | Elementary Algebra, Accounting, Technical courses requiring basic arithmetic foundation |
| Elementary Algebra | 0-12 | | Elementary Algebra (if Numerical Skills score is less than 21, follow Numerical Skills recommendations |
| | 13-15 | | Decision Zone |
| | 16-25 | | Intermediate Algebra |
| Intermediate Algebra | 0-12 | | Intermediate Algebra |
| | 13-15 | | Decision Zone |
| | 16-25 | | College Algebra |
| College Algebra | 0-12 | | College Algebra |
| | 13-15 | | Decision Zone |
| | 16-25 | | Calculus |

NOTE: If your score falls in a "Decision Zone," you will need to decide which direction you will want to go. Your skills appear to be on the borderline in terms of your readiness for the higher course. The lower level course would offer a good review and skill building experience. If you should choose the higher course, you will find that you must apply good study skills and probably more time than other students to be successful. You may wish to discuss your options with a counselor before you make your decision.

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